DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 360 722 EA 025 170

AUTHOR Jenni, Roger W.
TITLE Observing Different Attitudes in School Restructuring: Elementary vs. Secondary.
PUB DATE Apr 93
NOTE 31p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Atlanta, GA, April 12-16, 1993).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Educational Environment; Elementary Secondary Education; *Organizational Climate; *Participative Decision Making; Power Structure; *School Based Management; *School Restructuring; Teacher Attitudes

ABSTRACT

Findings of a study that examined the implementation of school-based management in an elementary and a secondary school are presented in this paper. The study attempted to identify certain phenomena that might be directly linked to attitudes or perceptions generated specifically by the differences inherent in elementary-secondary school settings. Over a 6-year period, data were collected through interviews with personnel at the two sites, document analysis, surveys, and observations. Findings indicate that although there were considerable organizational differences, few, if any, factors distinguished the adaptation of school-based management in an elementary setting from that of a secondary setting. However, the factors that influenced contrasting attributes appeared to lie outside the realm of elementary-secondary school differences. (Contains 38 references.) (LMI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 360 722

OBSERVING DIFFERENT ATTITUDES IN SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING: ELEMENTARY VS. SECONDARY

1993 AERA Annual Meeting

Atlanta

Roger W. Jenni

University of Minnesota

Correspondence:

Roger W. Jenni
4009 Deerwood Trail
Eagan, MN 55122
612-454-7356

EA 025 170

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. Jenni

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ABSTRACT

This study focuses on two schools that implemented school based management, one an elementary school, the other a secondary school. Both schools were granted considerable autonomy to design their SBM program to best fit their needs. The objective of this study was to attempt to determine if certain phenomena could be identified that might be directly linked to attitudes or perceptions generated specifically by the differences inherent in elementary-secondary school settings.

Data for the study was gathered from a six year time period with the bulk of the data being qualitative in nature. Most of the data came from interviews with personnel at the two sites and supporting data was gathered from artifacts, surveys, and on-site observations.

Findings from this study show that although there were considerable organizational differences, few if any factors distinguish the adaptation of school based management in an elementary setting from that of a secondary setting; rather, the factors that influenced contrasting attributes appeared to lie outside the realm of elementary-secondary school differences.

DESCRIPTORS:

School Based Management
Elementary/Secondary
Participatory Decision Making
School Restructuring

OBSERVING DIFFERENT ATTITUDES IN SCHOOL RESTRUCTURING: ELEMENTARY VS. SECONDARY

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The idea of citizen participation in education parallels the history of education in America. From the early colonial settlements to the present day, one of the great freedoms of America has been the localized control of schools (Honeywell, 1931). The degree to which this local control has been distributed to the stakeholders in the school community has been a recurring debate (Tyack, 1981; Campbell et al., 1985), and one which has come, once again, to the forefront the past two decades under the rubric of school based management (SBM).

Advocates of SBM have claimed that decentralizing the governance of schools would lead to greater productivity on the part of the school staff, more ownership in the concerns and decisions of the school by the members of the local community and a higher level of student learning (Belasco and Alutto, 1972; Garms, Guthrie and Pierce, 1978; Marburger, 1985). Few, if any of these hopes have been realized (Mauriel and Jenni, 1989; Malen, Ogawa and Kranz, 1990) although many different types of SBM programs have been attempted.

Three specific forms of SBM have been identified as commonly being used in schools today. They are: "community control" where power is shifted from professional educators and the board of education to parent and community groups made up of lay people not previously involved in school governance; "administrative decentralization" where the building level educators, namely the teachers, make up the majority on the site councils, and presumably, are empowered to make the decisions formerly made by the central administration; and "principal control" which, in

contrast to the other two, may or may not have a site council to assist in decision making (Wohlstetter and Odden 1992).

Since the design of an individual school's SBM program is often a matter of choice based on any number of localized concerns, many variations of these three models exist. This study was developed around two schools that initiated SBM programs most closely resembling the principal control model with site councils that included staff and community members.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Of key interest to this study was the comparison of the attitudes and beliefs held by the personnel of the two sites, one being an elementary school and the other a secondary school, as they pertained to the decentralization of power. Absent from much of the research on SBM was a discussion dealing with the broader issue of general organizational change brought about by implementing an innovation that could have such a high impact on the organizational members.

School based management, if introduced in a way in which autonomy is granted to individual school sites to make decisions and/or to form an additional level of governance with policy making responsibilities, constitutes the potential for major alterations within both the formal and informal subunits of the school organization (Mauriel, 1984). The objective of the study, therefore, was to examine if any differences existed between elementary and secondary school organizations or personnel in the implementation, practice and acceptance of SBM.

The following research question was set forth to guide this study: What are the factors that distinguish the adaptation of SBM in an elementary school setting from that of a secondary school setting? Related questions were: a. Do stakeholders at the two levels seek different advantages from SBM? b. Does the transfer of

power associated with SBM imply different meanings to the organizational members at the two levels? c. Do perceptions of influence, goal setting and attainment, and overall assessment of the SBM program differ between the two levels?

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology used to obtain the data for this study was primarily qualitative, with most of the data derived from interviewing actors closely involved with the SBM programs at the two schools. The interviews were structured, but allowed for open ended responses.

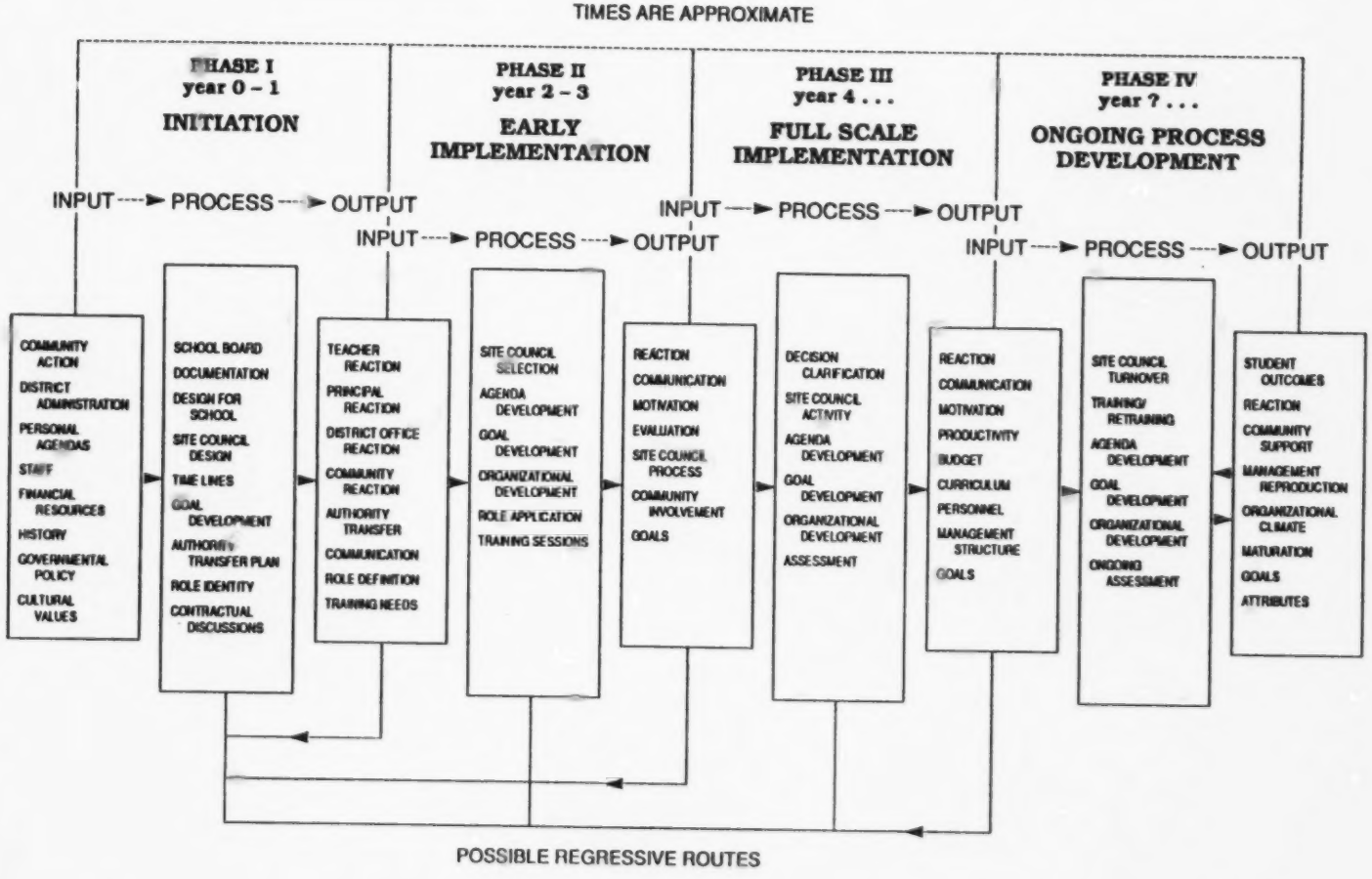
Triangulation of the data was obtained by four years of on-site observations at site council meetings, artifacts and documents obtained from the individual schools and central district office, and a survey given to a broad segment of the population involved with the schools. The survey, developed at the University of Minnesota Strategic Management Research Center, was designed to measure the effectiveness of a school's SBM program and the stakeholder's satisfaction with the program.

The collected data was synthesized into two individual case studies that followed a common format. This data was subsequently analyzed in a sequential comparative case study where similarities and contrasts were highlighted. To aid in the analytical process, the "School Based Management Process Development Model" was used to provide a consistent framework for analysis.[1]

---

[1] Roger W. Jenni, (1991) "Application of the School Based Management Process Development Model," School Effectiveness and School Improvement, Swets and Zeitlinger, Lisse, The Netherlands: Vol. 2 No. 2.

SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT PROCESS DEVELOPMENT MODEL



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

DELIMITATIONS

This study was bound by the narrow focus of its intent, namely an in-depth search for information from a relatively small and homogeneous sample; and although the detail of the phenomena relating to this study was considerable, the applicability of this work to other settings may be limited. The narrow focus of this study should not, however, limit its significance. Qualitative research is often aimed at a single case and tends to be more purposive than random; it tends to make gradual sense of a social phenomenon and does it in large part by contrasting, comparing, replicating, cataloguing and classifying the object of the study (Miles and Huberman, 1988).

Contributing to the limiting factors is the context in which these sites exist. Both schools were quite different organizationally, yet both were part of the same relatively large suburban district with an enrollment of approximately 20,000 students. The population of the district and each of the two sites was relatively homogeneous in terms of race and economic status. Consequently, any inferences concluded by this work need to be sifted through the sociological and cultural uniqueness of the sites chosen.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Five major and five minor strands of recurring phenomena, discovered in this study, allow for the construction of warranted statements regarding the implementation of SBM. The major strands are history, goal development, role identity, teacher reaction and authority transfer. The minor strands are agenda development, communication, evaluation, decision clarification, and training needs.

Cited as elements of history were the reluctance of the stakeholders at both levels to challenge the principal's authority or even to prompt anything that might appear disrespectful to the school administration, and the strong influences of the established values of the communities immediately surrounding the schools.

At both sites, goal development performed a highly salient role because it was the development of goals that actually drove the actions of the site councils. Lacking an overriding goal of purpose, the elementary site struggled each year to establish narrowly defined goals of questionable value; but the high school site, driven by a controversial yet highly visible mission statement, responded with aggressiveness and focus.

As far as role identity was concerned, representatives of both site councils failed to meet their expectations for role. At the elementary school, parents expressed dismay that they did not achieve a higher profile in the community. At both sites, teachers were unwilling to admit that their role had changed; it appeared that they did not want to be identified as a special representative with decision making responsibilities that a colleague didn't have. School administrators likewise saw no major role changes. Why representatives were unwilling to assume a role change evokes an interesting and confounding question to come from this study.

Teacher reaction was quite reserved, and this may hold a key to unlocking a major finding from this study. The elementary teachers generally displayed a neutral or nonverbal response to most issues at site council meetings, which other representatives interpreted as rather negative. By keeping a very low profile the elementary teachers may have been contributing to a dysfunction within the system. In a real sense, their lack of reaction aided in hindering their council's productivity and prevented them from having to accept unforseen changes.

At the high school site, teacher reaction was also subdued during the meetings, but it was quite obvious that issues were debated at length outside of the council. Here also, it is unknown

how much further the council might have progressed had the teachers openly shared their feeling at council meetings.

Regarding authority transfer, both councils had a long way to go to meet what might be considered truly innovative reform. In both cases, the principals kept tight control of the councils, and this did little to promote a feeling of equality among representative groups. It was quite clear at both sites that the ultimate responsibility for the group's actions would rest with the principal of the school. This hinderance to authority transfer was, in a way, built into the system. So long as the principal was held responsible by the district office for the operation of the school, it was nearly impossible for authority to be shared, especially with narrowly focused, part-time actors. This is a dilemma that supersedes the boundaries of site council power, and one that probably does more than any other to inhibit and limit the idea of decentralized governance.

Woven into the complexity of the phenomena were a number of strands that appeared frequently, but seemed to carry less impact than those previously mentioned. These strands are agenda development, communication, evaluation, decision clarification and training needs.

Agenda development was an issue at both levels because there was no real growth in the agenda process at either site. No record can be found of either council discussing how their agenda could be developed so it could better serve the needs of the group, or how it might be used to enhance the power of the site council.

Communication was used quite extensively by both groups. In fact, both groups identified improved communication as one of their main objectives; and they both worked quite hard to achieve it. Communication was a positive achievement for both site councils.

Evaluation was grossly lacking at both sites. Although the elementary school site council claimed to annually evaluate its goals, it was more of an approval review than an evaluation. The secondary school site council never seemed to even reach that

point. As a result, the voices of those that may have been dissatisfied with the action of the council were shut out, and the possibility of making better decisions by building on past experiences, was lost. To some degree, this lack of internal evaluation negatively affected the planning, productivity and effectiveness of both councils.

Decision clarification is closely related to authority transfer, but occurs in the later stages of site council development. Since there was a lack of authority transfer to begin with, supposedly little could be done to delineate responsibility in the decision making process. Yet it appeared that at the high school site, efforts were being made and results achieved that fulfilled this strand; and through the persistence of a few individuals, some change was happening. Additionally, policies were established that regularly utilized the talents of certain subgroups within the council. As a result, decision clarification was occurring, at least at one of the sites.

Training needs continued to pose an ongoing problem for both site councils. Because of the unequal representation of stakeholders, namely few administrators, a fair number of teachers, and a large number of parents, the same administrators were always part of the group, the interested teachers were somewhat frequent members, but for the parents, it was often a one-time opportunity. The result produced an inconsistency that was augmented by lack of experience and training on the part of the parents and a high level of experience on the part of administrators. How can equal representation ever be achieved with such a system?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS ANSWERED

In answering the initial research question upon which this study was based, it could be broadly stated that few, if any factors distinguish the adaptation of school based management in

an elementary school setting from that of an secondary school setting. Although the organizational and size characteristics of the two settings varied greatly, the factors that influenced contrasting attributes appeared to lie outside the realm of elementary-secondary school differences.

With minor exceptions, the stakeholders at the two levels did not appear to seek different advantages from SBM. Parents from both groups wanted recognition and information; teachers from both groups appeared to be the greatest hinderance to change; and administrators at both levels continued to retain approximately the same influence and power that they had before SBM was implemented at their schools.

The transfer of power, however, did appear to imply some different constructs to the organizational members at the two levels. For the administrators at both levels, the transfer of power initially meant the exposing of what was previously considered internal information; but the continuing degree to which this was carried out appeared to progress much further at the secondary site than it did at the elementary site. Yet it would not be fair to assess that this difference was due necessarily to elementary-secondary differences since the style and personality of the administrators probably also influenced the amount of information and power transferred.

What did appear to impact the amount of power transfer was the differing behaviors of the parents and teachers at the two levels. Representatives of both groups displayed a much more aggressive behavior pattern at site council meetings at the high school and placed much higher demands on the high school administrators for more information and action than did their counterparts at the elementary school. Ego, frustration, anxiety, anger, and persistence were all openly displayed at the high school's site council meetings; an aura of placid calmness pervaded the elementary school's meetings where members often privately spoke of not wanting to hurt anyone's feelings by being too demanding.

It could be stated that, for the most part, perceptions of influence and of goal setting and attainment, did appear to differ between the two levels, while the overall assessment of the SBM program, although vastly different at the two sites, was surprisingly quite comparable. For the secondary personnel, influence was a key issue in their mind. Confounding the issue was that many secondary personnel had a dissimilar idea of what influence meant and how to achieve it. Nonetheless, their personalized image of influence seemed to motivate them to behave much more aggressively and to push forward to achieve their objectives which tended to establish a foundation for goal setting and attainment.

The elementary personnel, on the other hand, displayed a much more reserved attitude toward influence, consistently noting that the proper place for decisions rested with the principal and generally being satisfied with being given the chance to express an opinion regardless of its strength. Not surprisingly, this type of established group norm, well entrenched with nearly a decade of council meetings, led to relatively expected, conforming types of goals which were readily attainable but often unchallenging and uneventful. With this overbalance of influence from one source, namely the principal, the effectiveness of the elementary group was probably hindered.

The overall assessment of the SBM program at the two sites was strikingly similar with one exception. At both sites the administrators and parents were highly satisfied; and, while the elementary teachers were also quite happy with the program, the secondary teachers ranked it the lowest of all representative groups. In commenting on their relatively negative stance, the high school teachers expressed the belief that the investment they made in effort fell far short of the return they expected to receive from an SBM program.

In summary, it did not appear evident from the data gathered for this study that stakeholders at the two levels sought different

advantages from SBM. However, it was apparent that the transfer of power, perceptions of influence, goal setting and attainment, and overall assessment of their school's SBM program did differ at the two levels. To what extent this can be attributed to elementary-secondary peculiarities or uniquenesses is debatable, but at least some of these differences appear related to the established cultures and norms of the two levels.

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Public education is essentially the disparate combination of humanistic and political forces set on preserving vaguely defined social norms. It is within this contextual definition of education that the conclusions derived from this research project are founded.

Power is universal; it is in the defining of power that its scope is often narrowed and its impact underestimated. The conclusions of this study will be based the ideas of Robert Dahl, a political scientist who, in attempting to explain the concept of power, spoke of it broadly as simply the relation among people. Stated more concisely, power consists of all the resources that one actor can exploit in order to affect the behavior of another (Dahl, 1957). The conclusions drawn from this study make no attempt to limit this definition or the potential impact of power, but rather to acknowledge its vast salience in a system that consists almost entirely on relationships among people, an ideology that is value based, and a practice that has both tradition and symbolism at the very center of its being.

Early advocates of school reform and SBM spoke of the process of decentralizing school governance as a means of redistributing power within the school system (Marburger, 1985; Guthrie, 1986). Research, however, did not support the idea that teachers necessarily wanted more decision making power. In fact, some

teachers were found to be not very anxious to participate in school-wide managerial decisions and derived little satisfaction when they did (Belasco and Alutto, 1972; Duke, Showers, and Imber, 1980; Theirbach-Schneider, 1984). Other studies noted that few school reforms succeed as planned because teachers passively resisted "buying in" to intended changes (Maloy and Jones, 1987).

With strong advocacy for school reform from political bases and large numbers of schools attempting various forms of site based management schemes but with little measurable change in organizational achievements, researchers appeared to be grasping for words to describe the phenomena of much effort but little return. Phrases and terms such as myth and mystery (Conway, 1984) confounding (Malen and Ogawa, 1988) and fallacies (Mauriel and Jenni, 1989) were being found in titles of research papers to describe the presumed devolution but un-manifested power that was to be associated with SBM.

CONCLUSION 1: Teachers intuitively reject the idea that power is available to be delegated. They perceive that any governance change is likely to cause them a loss rather than a gain of power.

This conclusion has basically two parts, the first being that as far as teachers are concerned, the idea that there is power to be shared is false; the second, which bears upon the first, is that teachers fear that any change is likely to cause them a loss of power. Why would teachers feel that there is really no power to share when policy and administrative decisions could be part of the decentralization package? Wouldn't this give teachers an additional voice in school management? Judging from the data collected in this study, the answer would have to be not necessarily, at least not without them potentially compromising some of the power that they

currently hold.

This argument should not be construed as implying that teachers don't desire a greater voice in policy decisions; but rather, when the fear of decision involvement might carry a price, the behavior of teachers was generally one of exit rather than voice (Hirschman, 1970). This unique behavior pattern of exiting from discussion when the issue at hand carried ramifications that would apply to their classroom was the most commonly shared attribute observed among elementary and secondary school teachers.

To some degree, this behavior may be attributable to sociological traits commonly associated with teachers. One expectation of teachers is that among their primary functions are those of policeman and judge in the classroom (Morrison and McIntyre, 1969); and since authority structures in schools are loose and students spend most of their time with classroom teachers, the goals to which the teachers are committed are particularly influential (Lortie, 1975). Additionally, since the technology of teaching is neither well defined or well accepted and because of teaching's unspecified technology, it is difficult to maintain effective oversight, and the supervision and evaluation of teaching are notoriously weak (Johnson, 1990).

The conception of the teacher being an authority figure while developing highly influential goals and working in a setting that has a history of little specificity, supervision or evaluation, adds up to a high degree of autonomy. This autonomy may be threatened when ideas foreign to the status quo are introduced, especially if they are introduced by outsiders; and it is quite possible that teachers perceive both parents and administrators as outsiders. So when ideas are introduced by outsiders that are perceived as impacting either their goals, authority or autonomy, the teachers will use what power they have, as Dahl stated, to affect the behavior of others.

In this study, both elementary and secondary teachers tended to refrain from either responding to ideas on the table or to

introducing ideas of their own, unless specifically challenged. Not only did this behavior limit the effectiveness of the site councils on specific actions; it caused other members of both councils to question why teachers acted that way at meetings; and, for the less experienced council members, it occasionally amounted to them thinking they had said something that had offended the teachers.

Other studies have also noted unique aspects of teachers in decentralized decision making. Jane Hannaway posits that teachers hold only unclear and ambiguous goals, and when they are involved in decisions about their work, their professional life is more observable and therefore more open to monitoring and influence by others (Hannaway, 1992). Betty Malen and Rod Ogawa found that the near absence of teacher resistance enabled principals to exert substantial influence on the SICs (Malen and Ogawa, 1988). Although coming from different studies and perspectives, the common result remains the same, namely, that in the minds of most teachers, a loss of autonomy does not equate with an increase of power.

CONCLUSION 2: Although not found to be the primary factor influencing SBM adaptation, elementary-secondary differences were themselves interesting phenomenon and played a decided role in the cultures of the schools.

Initially, this study set out to expose the differences in elementary-secondary school cultures and to search for identifiable characteristics that helped or hindered the implementation of school based management. As previously noted, the findings overall did not point to the impact of elementary-secondary organizations. Although the appearance of elementary-secondary cultural differences were well documented in the data, this study did not produce compelling evidence that these differences were, by themselves, influential.

For example, although the attitudes of the high school teachers appeared to be more subject oriented, more prone to departmentalized issues, more openly opinionated and more ego driven than their elementary counterparts, no definitive evidence could be found that the abundance or lack of any of these traits, individually or collectively, aided or inhibited the process of SBM in their respective schools.

Administratively, the elementary school was led by one principal and a part-time assistant, and the high school by an administrative team consisting of a principal and six assistants. This configuration automatically pulled the high school principal away from many of the lackluster management chores while at the same time establishing a greater distance from the students, parents and teachers than was experienced by the elementary principal. Again, this did not appear to play a role in the adaptation of SBM. The management style of the principals may have had an impact on SBM, but management style as an individual attribute cannot necessarily be connected to elementary-secondary school differences.

If there was one factor attributable to a difference between elementary and secondary school adaptation of SBM, it would have to be the involvement of parents. Most noticeable was the high level of trust and faith the elementary school parents placed on the decisions, recommendations and opinions of the teachers and administrators. For an elementary school parent to disagree with a teacher or the principal during a site council meeting was almost unconscionable. Likewise, any criticism directed toward elementary teachers or administrators during field interviews was of a most gentle and kind nature.

This was not the situation at the high school's site council meetings, nor were words spared in describing opinions of secondary administrators and teachers in interviews. High school parents appeared to be much more willing to risk their own opinions at site council meetings and aggressively fought for causes they felt

enamored with.

Whether these disparate parental behaviors influenced the adaptation of SBM seem likely, but questions remain: Do the attitudes of parents change as their children grow older? Are there unique factors that help motivate high school parents to be more aggressive as opposed to a more submissive behavior at the elementary school?

CONCLUSION 3: For site councils to be effective, goals and goal development must be multilevel in design and broadly visible.

In comparing public school and commercial business managerial decentralization, John Mauriel concluded that businesses decentralized to improve decision making effectiveness, timeliness and results (i.e. profits) while schools decentralized to improve public relations and/or for performance reasons (Mauriel, 1988). Schools appear to make plans to incorporate a decentralized management system for any number of reasons, some being prompted by the community, some by the school district, and others by the school site itself, and it is quite possible this ambiguity of a central purpose affects goals and eventual outputs.

Since schools, unlike businesses, do not have a productivity line to improve or quarterly reports with which to compare profits, the measurement of any attempted school improvement is encumbered with changing definitions and social demands. What might have been a prominent issue when an innovation was initiated may fade from public concern by the time the means are established to address it. Likewise, although test scores can be an issue around which school improvement can be tethered, annual changes in population and staffing often make test scores subject to many variables as well. As a result, many SBM programs that are initiated simply because of a particular surge of sentiment are prone to succumb to a maze

of disorganization and ineptness.

Goals are also hindered when the state, district and school sites do not have complementary policies, or when schools are not able to provide rewards to the participants for goal accomplishment (Wholstetter and Odden, 1992). At the sites from which data for this study was gathered, only a few of the key elements for attainment existed.

At the elementary school, there were only vague ideas of and no real consensus for the goals of the site council, and although a lot of short term, relatively easily achievable goals were set and worked on, the productivity of the council was hindered by a lack of overriding purpose. At one point when discussing goals, the principal was quoted as saying: "It was not my decision to have site based management in our school." At other times, the goals of the site council were confused with the goals of other organizations in the school. Considering that SBM had been established in this elementary school for nearly a decade, and with admittedly few restraints from the outside, this had to be a rather grim report on the potential of SBM's ability to reform a school. Strange as it may seem, it was the participants themselves that recognized their own bewildering situation, but took no corrective action. It is quite possible that clearly defined and accepted SBM goals would have corrected this lack of achievement.

The high school site had slightly more visible goals and correspondingly more visible achievements. Even though the policy goal that drove the council was far from what many members personally interpreted SBM to mean, it still provided a foundation upon which to establish behavior. The result was occasionally a highly charged and achieving group that operated within a framework of understanding. Smaller tasks could be introduced and either discarded or acted upon because of a definition of purpose.

From an even broader perspective, the principal's vision of what the site council was to become provided a path for growth. Although he kept his thoughts concealed from public view for

political reasons, this principal would occasionally talk about how the council was "about a year behind" of where he hoped it would be at a particular point in time and then name some of the internal hindrances that he thought had plagued progress.

It needs to be concluded, then, that in order for SBM to productively exist in a school, it must operate with at least two levels of goals, and preferably with three levels. These levels need to include a vision for the future, a policy for current direction, and time-localized events for action. All goal levels need to be publicly visible and internally understood. Equally important, evaluation of the goals at all levels needs to be an ongoing activity. It is striking how important goals are in any plan. If direction is confused, how can power be exerted? For it is only through direction that power can be manifested. The absence of goals basically adds up to a reaction to change.

CONCLUSION 4: The likelihood that SBM will make a profound difference in school governance is slim, but the fact that citizens are involved in the process is important.

Freedom implies the ability to make choices; it does not guarantee that the choices made will be superior to what might have occurred had choice not been an option. Inherent in the belief of freedom is the belief that freedom to choose will further the cause of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." If we accept the definition of education as being the disparate combination of humanistic and political forces set on preserving vaguely defined social norms, it is easy to understand why the idea of SBM is both appealing and assuring as a means of "fixing what's wrong" with education. SBM provides an opportunity for broader societal and consumer input in the community control model, better use of expert knowledge in the administrative decentralization model, and greater

freedom from conformity in the principal control model (Wholstetter and Odden, 1992). All models promise greater freedom from outside hindrances to localized choice making and more independence. These are lofty ideals in a world of shrinking resources and space! They also carry with them the promise of opportunity to preserve the local values, both humanistic and political. It is this promise that must be the greatest appeal to most advocates of SBM.

In a landmark work synthesizing the development of SBM in American schools, Betty Malen et al., described the objectives of SBM as enabling teachers and parents to have greater influence, enhancing employee morale and motivation, strengthening school planning processes, stimulating instructional improvements and improving student academic achievements (Malen, Ogawa and Kranz, 1989). They conclude that there is little evidence that SBM plans have achieved their objectives.

Researchers since the Malen study have likewise been unable to identify clear educational achievements from SBM. Many researchers appear to be still searching for ways to make SBM work, apparently holding firm to the belief that there is some merit to be found in it (Hannaway, 1992; Wholstetter, 1992; Ferris, 1993).

In this study, there was no attempt by either school to measure if SBM was making a difference in student achievement. This should not be misconstrued. The participants did believe that their efforts were making a difference, but they were simply relying on their own feelings while avoiding formal attempts to measure change.

There was no doubt that they believed in the process, evidenced by their responses, their regular attendance at meetings and their high level of participation in council activities; but this belief was either blind or compensatory. Although they were unselfish in their contributions, they admittedly set personal and group achievement levels far below what they could have accomplished.

Essentially, the question becomes one of asking if the time spent on SBM is worth it if no real change emerges. Perhaps it is too early to judge, but if participation generates positiveness and support (Miller, 1980), then the school, and eventually the students, are the winners regardless of measurable outcomes.

CONCLUSION 5: Shared knowledge appears to be the appeal of SBM.

In one of the most widely quoted descriptive works on power, French and Raven distinguished power as reward, coercive, legitimate, referent and expert (French and Raven, 1959). Working from a similar perspective a quarter century later, Mintzberg identified the three primary bases of power in an organization to be control of: 1. a resource, 2. a technical skill, or 3. a body of knowledge (Mintzberg, 1983). Mintzberg also lists two other lesser bases of power which bear upon the primary three. One deals with legal perogatives, to be discussed later, and the other is described as access. He notes that access can be personal, customer oriented, simply being close to the action, or through reciprocity.

Information (interchanged here for a body of knowledge) was by far the most often mentioned power base by the respondents in this study. At both levels, although more so at the elementary than the secondary, parents appeared to be satisfied just to become better acquainted with the operations of the school, to be an "insider", with or without influential power. Several parent respondents noted that they were satisfied just to be listened to by the principal, whether or not the principal took their advice. For them, it was simply a way to gain access.

Both elementary and secondary parents expressed surprise and disappointment that they were not held in higher esteem by the general public although some did mention that it made them feel

good to be able to explain the inner workings of the school to their neighbors. High school parents, in particular, mentioned that it made them feel more willing to publicly defend the school's actions when controversy over school policy arose.

For teachers, information was viewed quite differently. In almost every interview, when power was being discussed, the teachers mentioned information as the greatest asset the administrators had. Teachers saw information as something the administrators controlled and parcelled out in bits and pieces to get their plans and programs accepted by the site councils. For some reason, the teachers felt that the information they possessed was secondary to that of the administrators, even though in many cases, because of their work, they were closer to the situations.

Unlike the parents, the teacher representatives did not expect high levels of esteem or input from their constituents for being a part of the site council. From their perspective, ownership of information did not constitute power for them, at least not in an overt way. If anything, the teacher's base of power from information came from the same direction that they accused the administrators of, namely withholding information in hopes of blocking change.

Administrators seemed delighted with the information they got from the representatives. For them it meant a broader perspective on the concerns surrounding the issue, and, at least from the parent representatives, the expectation of community support for decisions made. For the administrators, parent and community representatives can be the ears and eyes of the public; and since the administrators, in most cases bound by contract, still hold legal prerogatives - exclusive rights to impose choices (Mintzberg, 1983), they can use this information to actually increase their power. This becomes a rather strange twist in the original plan of what many expected school decentralization to be.

For both administrators and parents, SBM provided an enhancement of knowledge basically through a combination of access

and reciprocity. By the administrators accessing the pulse of the parents in the community in an objective setting as opposed to a political coalition group, they were more able to gain a comprehensive view of both the status of issues and themselves as perceived by the constituents outside of the building. Additionally, they were almost always assured that decisions made would result in broad public support. Parents would gain information on how the school operated which, according to the respondents in this study, helped improve their image of the school.

REMARKS, RESEARCH SUGGESTIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

Considering that knowledge, access and reciprocity are substantive gains for schools implementing SBM programs, perhaps we should not be surprised that little evidence can be found naming student achievement a viable outcome of SBM. Whether student achievement can become an future objective for SBM remains to be seen. So long as SBM committees are comprised of experienced administrators trained to manage, seasoned practitioners with autonomous values and techniques, and part-time occasional participants that seek rewards from simply belonging, the expectations of SBM as an agent of change should not be set too high.

This is not to imply that SBM programs are without merit, but rather to consider options, especially in terms of what expectations should be anticipated from the program and then set a course aimed at achievement. One very large concern discovered in this study was the disappointment experienced by the high school teachers. All of those interviewed had advanced degrees, some in several fields attesting to their love, determination and commitment to their career. Yet all expressed a deep sense of disappointment over the way they saw the SBM program going in their

school. Granted, the rewards they received from the program were few compared to the concessions they believed they lost, but the real problem centered around the defining of what SBM would mean for them. They took the title and the advocacy literature on SBM literally and expected to gain power; it did not happen for them. Whether or how this affected their work was not addressed by this study, but the attitude expressed by many high school teachers toward SBM was far from positive.

Consequently, the first, and potentially most important, question to be answered by future research is this: In some instances, can SBM programs be detrimental to the process of educating? This question is founded on two unrelated but converging factors. The first is that there continues to be an unquestioning assumption held by many that decentralized management will benefit education (Wirth, 1993), and countless hours are spent on researching why it does or doesn't work with little question as to its merits. The second deals with the tradition of teacher autonomy in the classroom.

The converging of these two factors is likely to present some strain on the system. Both factors carry with them a combination of tradition and a belief in progress. For decentralized management there is the promise of participation and better decisions, images that can be associated with our political form of national governance. For teacher autonomy, there is the symbolic belief in independence and the power of teaching and controlling what is being taught, based on a tradition that stretches back to the foundations of Western Culture. Can these two ideas be meshed, or will the students become the victims rather than the beneficiaries?

A second question also deals with power, but from a perspective of a school site's options in setting and attaining goals. It was concluded from this study that goal setting and development needed to be multilevel in design and broadly visible. What needs to be determined is this: From what source do the most salient and attainable goals for school improvement originate? In

the two sites studied for this project, the most attainable goals came from the parents, and the most salient goals, although few in number, came from the administration. At both the high school and elementary school, the teachers played a very minor role in goal development.

In order for goals to be effective and objectives met, at least part of a group's work on goals needs to contain the ongoing process of goal evaluation, refinement and finally assessment. These procedures were basically absent from the sites in this study; so it was impossible to judge if things would have been different if the groups had made course corrections and evaluations.

The power of setting the goals appears to be dependent on the power of setting the agenda. At both sites in this study, the principal essentially controlled the agenda. As a result, any long or short term goal had to go through the principal. A related question that is left unanswered then, is this: How much potential goal setting, evaluation, refinement and assessment is blocked by the individual(s) that control the agenda?

Finally, more work needs to be done on cataloging and comparing the differences between elementary and secondary school personnel. As practitioners, teachers are well trained in how students develop physically, sociologically and academically, but what is rarely asked is how the job a teacher has fits with the personal demands of the individual. Although definitive works have been done on why individuals enter the teaching profession (Lortie, 1975; Goodlad, 1984; Johnson, 1990), few studies address in a comparative way, the cultures and expectations of the various levels at which teachers work. To lump the needs and job rewards of a primary grade teacher working in a relatively flat organizational setting and having as a dominant focus the desire to have the students learn to socially get along with each other, with the needs and job rewards of a secondary teacher who may also be a department chairperson with coaching responsibilities, is

ludicrous. Correspondingly, there appears to be a lack of desire for a role change on the part of those serving on the site councils, particularly the teachers. This reluctance to assume a role or status different from their peers is also one that needs to be investigated.

The demands society places on its educational systems are great although these demands are tempered somewhat by the freedom given the system to fulfill them. Yet based on this realization that there is a plurality of social and political demands being placed on educational systems, not the least of them being school reorganization, perhaps more study needs to be done to determine if there is a fit between the people doing the work of educating and the future expectations of the job.

Does SBM have a place in contemporary educational systems? If so, how can it be enhanced? This study has made some rather broad statements suggesting that if goals are properly set and knowledge and information shared, the system has a much better chance of working, especially for parents and administrators. Whether or not SBM will make a significant difference in the education of children, or what its long term effects might be on the teachers is still to be determined; but SBM's appeal lies in participating, and participation is one of the great pillars of democracy.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abbott, Andrew. "Event Sequence and Event Duration: Colligation and Measurement." Historical Methods, Vol. 17, No. 4, 1984, p. 192-204.

Alutto, J.A. and Belasco, J.A. "Typology for Participation in Organizational Decision Making." Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 17, No. 1, March, 1972.

Belasco, J.A. and Alutto, J.A. "Decisional Participation and Teacher Satisfaction." Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 8, No. 1, Winter, 1972.

Campbell, Roald F. et al. The Organization and Control of American Schools. Columbus, OH: Merrill, 1985.

Clune, W. H., and White, P.A. School Based Management: Institutional Variation, Implementation, and Issues for Further Research. (Center for Policy Research in Education), New Brunswick, NJ: Eagleton Institute of Politics, 1988.

Conway, James A. "The Myth, Mystery, and Mastery of Participative Decision Making in Education." Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 20, No. 3, Summer 1984, pp. 11-40.

Dahl, Robert A. "The Concept of Power." Behavioral Science, No. 2, 201-215, 1957.

Duke, D.L., Showers, B.K., and Imber, M. "Teachers and Shared Decision Making: The Costs and Benefits of Involvement." Educational Administration Quaterly, Vol. 16, No. 1, 1980, pp. 93-106.

Ferris, James M. "School Based Decision Making: A Principal-Agent Perspective." Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Vol. 14, No. 4, Winter, 1992, pp. 333-346.

French, J. Jr., and Raven, B. "The Social Bases of Power." in Studies in Social Power, ed. Cartwright, D., Institute for Social Research, University of MIchigan, Ann Arbor: 1959, pp. 150-167.

Garms, W.I., Guthrie, J.W., and Pierce, L.C. School Finance, The Economics and Politics of Public Education. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1978.

Goodlad, John I. A Place Called School. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984.

Guthrie, James W. "School Based Management: The Next Needed Educational Reform." Phi Delta Kappan, Vol. 68, No. 4, 1986.

Hannaway, Jane. "Decentralization, Social Control and Technical Demands: Two Cases In Education." Decentralization and Education, Hannaway and Carnoy eds., San Francisco: Josey-Bass (forthcoming).

Hannaway, Jane. "Political Pressure and Decentralization in Institutional Organizations: The Case of School Districts." forthcoming, Sociology of Education.

Hirschman, Albert O. Exit, Voice, and Loyalty. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970.

Honeywell, Roy J. The Educational Work of Thomas Jefferson. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1931.

Jenni, Roger W. "Application of the School Based Management Process Development Model." School Effectiveness and School Improvement, Lisse, The Netherlands: Vol. 2, No. 2, 1991.

Jenni, Roger, and Mauriel, John. "An Examination of the Factors Affecting Stakeholder's Assessment of School Decentralization." Journal of School Business Management, January, 1991.

Johnson, Susan Moore. Teachers at Work. New York: Basic Books, 1990.

Lorti, Dan C. School Teacher. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975.

Malen, Betty, Ogawa, Rodney, and Kranz, Jennifer. An Analysis of Site-Based Management As An Education Reform Strategy. UT: University of Utah, June, 1989.

Malen, B. and Ogawa, R.T. "Professional-patron Influence on Site-based Governance Councils: A Confounding Case Study." Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, Vol. 10, No. 4, 1988, pp. 251-270.

Maloy, R.W. and Jones, B.L. "Teachers, Partnerships, and School Improvement." Journal of Research and Development in Education, Vol. 20, No. 2, Winter, 1987, pp. 19-24.

Marburger, Carl L. One School At A Time, School Based Management, A Process for Change. National Committee for Citizens in Education. Columbia, MD: 1985.

Mauriel, John J. Major Strategic Issues Facing Public School Incentives. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Strategic Management Research Center, 1984.

Mauriel, John J. "Rationale for Decentralized (Site) Managment in Public Schools." Minneapolis, MN: AERA Paper, University of Minnesota Strategic Management Research Center, 1988.

Mauriel, John. "School Based Management and Decisionmaking--Myths and Realities." Minnesota Innovation Research Program, Minneapolis: 1988.

Mauriel, John, and Jenni, Roger. School Based Management Falacies and Facts. Minneapolis, MN: (University of Minnesota Strategic Management Research Center), March, 1989.

Miles, William R. and Huberman, A. Michael. Qualitative Data Analysis, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publication, 1984.

Miller, Jon. "Decision Making and Organizational Effectiveness." Sociology of Work and Occupations, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1980, Sage Publications, pp. 55-79.

Mintzberg, Henry. Power In And Around Organizations. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1983.

Morrison, A., and McIntyre, D.. Teachers and Teaching. Baltimore: Penguin, 1969.

Pfeffer, Jeffrey. Power In Organizations. Boston: Pitman, 1981.

Theirbach-Schneider, Gail. "Teacher Involvement in Decision Making: Zones of Acceptance, Decision Conditions, and Job Satisfaction." Journal of Research and Development in Education, Vol. 18, No. 1, 1984.

Tyack, David B. "Historical Perspectives on Education." in Communities and Their Schools, Don Davies, ed., New York: McGraw-Hill, 1981.

Wohlstetter, Pricilla, and McCurdy, Karen. "The Link Between School Decentralization and School Politics." Urban Education, Vol. 25, No. 4, 1991, pp. 391-414.

Wohlstetter, Pricilla, and Odden, Allan. "Rethinking School-Based Management Policy and Research." Educational Administration Quarterly, Vol. 28, No. 4, 1992.